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**RHODE ISLAND  
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*SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK*

**WELFARE REFORM EVALUATION PROJECT**  
*Study of welfare reform and Rhode Island's beneficiaries*

**WORKING PAPER: A brief look at a representative sample  
of Rhode Island FIP beneficiaries and in-migration factors**

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**March 21, 2003**

**Overview:**

A total of 638 current and former Family Independence Program (FIP) beneficiaries are included in this five-year longitudinal study. This is a representative sample of 3.4 percent of all FIP participants at the time the program was first implemented. Baseline interviews and electronic case record reviews were conducted during the period of February 1998 through October 1999. All study participants were receiving FIP at the time of their baseline interviews. This was a requirement for participation in the study.

During the initial interviews for this longitudinal study, FIP beneficiaries were asked a series of questions about their residency in other states prior to living in Rhode Island. If they had resided in any other state, they were then asked whether they had received cash assistance in another state and their main reason for moving to Rhode Island. The following is a summary of the responses to these items. Since these data were collected at baseline, the responses are indicative of respondents' in-migration history at the time that the FIP program was first being implemented.

### **Residency:**

As can be seen in Table 1 below, more than half of the respondents (56.3%) said that they had lived outside of Rhode Island at some time in their life. Two hundred seventy-nine respondents (43.7%) had lived in Rhode Island for their entire life.

**Table 1**  
**Residency history at time of FIP Implementation**

	Frequency	Percent
Always lived in RI	279	43.7
Lived elsewhere at sometime in life	359	56.3
Total	638	100.0

When asked where they lived before coming to Rhode Island, the largest percentage had moved from Massachusetts (10.8%; n=69), followed by New York (10.3%; n=66). Migration from other New England states included 13 respondents from Connecticut (2%), four families from New Hampshire (0.6%), and one family each from Maine (0.2%) and Vermont (0.2%). See Table 2 on the following page.

**Table 2**  
**State of residency before moving or returning to RI**

	Frequency	Percent
RI or no response	288	45.1
AL	1	.2
AR	1	.2
AZ	3	.5
CA	17	2.7
CL	1	.2
CO	1	.2
CT	13	2.0
CV	1	.2
DR	8	1.3
FC	14	2.2
FL	28	4.4
GA	7	1.1
IA	1	.2
IL	4	.6
IN	1	.2
KY	3	.5
MA	69	10.8
MD	2	.3
ME	4	.6
MI	4	.6
MN	1	.2
MO	2	.3
MS	3	.5
NC	4	.6
NH	4	.6
NJ	16	2.5
NM	1	.2
NV	3	.5
NY	66	10.3
OH	2	.3
OK	1	.2
PA	10	1.6
PR	27	4.2
SC	3	.5
SD	1	.2
TN	4	.6
TX	6	.9
UT	1	.2
VA	4	.6
VI	3	.5
VT	1	.2
WA	3	.5
WI	1	.2
Total	638	100.0

In response to the question, what was the main reason for your most recent move to Rhode Island, the majority (65.3%) stated that it was because they had family or friends here. The next most frequent response was that they needed to get away from problems in their previous locations (11.5%), followed by coming here for employment opportunities (8.2%). Twenty-one respondents (6.2%) said that they came to RI to get away from a domestic violence situation. Domestic violence tied with housing problems as the 4<sup>th</sup> most frequent reason given for moving to Rhode Island. Better welfare benefits (1.2%), better health care (0.9%), and better child care (0.6%) were the least frequently given responses to this question. See Table 3 below.

**Table 3**  
**Main reason for moving to Rhode Island**

	Frequency	Percent
Family or friends here	222	65.3
Employment opportunities here	28	8.2
Better welfare here	4	1.2
Get away from domestic violence	21	6.2
Housing	21	6.2
Health care	3	.9
Child care	2	.6
Needed to get away from problems in previous locations	39	11.5
Total	340	100.0

As can be seen in Table 4 below, the majority of respondents stated that they had never received welfare or cash benefits in a state other than Rhode Island.

**Table 4**  
**Welfare participation: History in another state**

	Frequency	Percent
Never received welfare in another state	249	65.5
Yes, I received welfare in another state	131	34.5
Total	380	100.0

Of those respondents who had received welfare in another state, Massachusetts and New York were the states most frequently reported. Twenty-seven people (4.2%) reported having received cash benefits at some time in Massachusetts and twenty-two people (3.4%) reported receiving cash benefits at some time in New York. See Table 5 below.

**Table 5**

**States where respondents have received welfare**

	Frequency	Percent
RI only	532	83.4
AR	1	.2
CA	5	.8
CT	7	1.1
FL	10	1.6
GA	2	.3
IA	1	.2
IL	1	.2
KY	1	.2
MA	27	4.2
MD	1	.2
ME	1	.2
MI	2	.3
MS	1	.2
NJ	4	.6
NM	1	.2
NV	1	.2
NY	22	3.4
PA	2	.3
PR	8	1.3
SC	1	.2
TN	2	.3
TX	2	.3
UT	1	.2
VA	1	.2
WA	1	.2
Total	638	100.0